

Docket No. 220005

gas and a liquid for cleaning.

Claims 25-76 and claims 88-93 however are directed to methods of cleaning contaminant materials from hollow tubing using a two-phase flow of a gas and a liquid that forms droplets that impact contaminants on the walls of tubing that create impact and stresses that loosen contaminants and allow them to be flushed away. Claims 25-34 are directed to forming a two-phase flow of a cleaning solution and a gas that, as it travels along the hollow tubing, creates droplets that cause shear and impact stresses on the walls of the tubing that loosen the contaminants so that they can be flushed away.

Claims 35-76 are directed to cleaning tubing of a particular type, hemodialyzer tubing, which is also cleaned by a two-phase solution of a liquid and a gas that produces droplets on the tubing walls that cause shear and impact stresses on the walls of the tubing that loosen the contaminants so that they can be flushed away. Claims 88-93 are directed to apparatus that delivers a two phase flow of a cleaning solution and a gas (air) to a dialyzer, comprising a plurality of hollow tubes. Thus applicants submit that while the Groups 1, 2 and 4 claims are independent, in the sense that they include independent rather

Docket No. 220005

than dependent claims, they have a cleaning mechanism in common, in that the mechanism of cleaning involves the generation of a two phase flow of a cleaning liquid and a gas that creates droplets that can impact the tubing walls, thereby creating stresses that loosen contaminants in the tubing and allow them to be flushed away.

Thus applicants submit these claims can be and should be considered together as Group I.

Alternatively, the claims of Group II, claims 35-76 and Group IV, claims 88-93 at least should be considered together. These claims require backflushing and cleaning of a hemodialyzer. Thus applicants submit these claims at least should be considered together as alternate Group I.

In view of the above, applicants request that the four-way restriction requirement be withdrawn and a two-way restriction requirement substituted therefor. In such case applicants will elect the claims of Group I or alternate Group I.

However, in the event that the original restriction

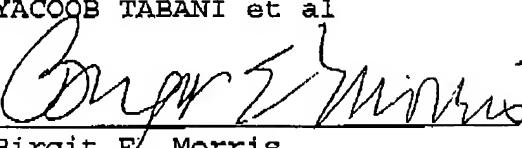
Docket No. 220005

requirement is confirmed, applicants elect the claims of Group
II.

Respectfully submitted,

YACOOB TABANI et al

By


Birgit E. Morris
Registration No. 24,484

Birgit E. Morris, Esq
16 Indian Head Road
Morristown, NJ 07960
(973) 656-9591